

**Improving Work Relations Between Career and Volunteer Fire and Rescue Members
of the Montgomery County, Maryland
Fire and Rescue Service**

Executive Leadership

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ABSTRACT

The Montgomery County, Maryland, Government reorganized the fire and rescue service in July 1998 and required both career and volunteers to work together in a combination system of service delivery. However, there was a history of bad relations between the two groups of service providers. One challenge of the new organization was to find ways to improve relations between the two groups.

The purpose of this research project was to identify cultural characteristics that caused or supported the bad relations between the service providers, develop methods to reduce the impact of the negative cultures, and recommend new organizational characteristics that would improve the relations between the career and volunteers. A descriptive research methodology was used to answer the following research questions:

1. What organizational conditions impede favorable relations between career and volunteer fire and rescue members?
2. What behaviors will be desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members?
3. What organizational guidelines are in place or need to be added to guide relations between career and volunteer members?
4. What do career and volunteer members identify as their expectations of the other in regard

to favorable relations?

5. How do the members rate the organization in regard to trust, working conditions and morale?

The descriptive research method was used to review business and organizational literature, with the focus on leadership and organizational culture. A survey and interviews were conducted to assess the member's perceptions of work relations between career and volunteer members. The returned surveys were analyzed to determine patterns of data that would provide an indication of relations. Data from the survey was compiled in spreadsheets and word processing text form to assist with analysis.

The findings revealed that members of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service generally supported the combination system, but did not fully understand where they fit in and how they should interact. There were indications that leaders needed to establish a strong central commitment and support for the combination system and effectively communicate member expectations and roles.

This applied research project led to a list of recommendations that focused on the improvement in the work relations of members. Eleven recommendations were presented which included: 1) Fully describe and document what a combination EMS, fire and rescue system is and what it means to the members of MCFRS and specifically how the MCFRS should operate and what the roles and expectations are of its members. 2) Leaders must show and communicate commitment to the combination system by aggressively promoting the conceptual framework

and the requirement that the services will be delivered in an integrated fashion. 3) Members must accept their integral role in the combination. 4) Creation of a special credo, describing how members should treat each other. 5) Constant promotion of the progress and achievement of the organization should be provided with the intent of raising the esteem of the members. 6) Institution of on-going feedback to allow leaders and followers alike to know how the organization is doing. 7) Interaction with other combination systems should be initiated to enhance the understanding of this concept for service delivery. 8) Seek and encourage participation and input from all membership areas of the organization. 9) Provide ongoing/periodic opportunity for representatives of all groups to bring out and discuss problems and concern each group might have. 10) Require all work sites and member groups to develop on-going projects aimed at involving and integrating other member groups in collaboration. 11) Identify and provide substantial reward for excellence in work group relations between career and volunteer members.

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INTRODUCTION

The Montgomery County, Maryland, Government reorganized the fire and rescue service in July 1998 and requires both career and volunteers to work together in a combination system of service delivery. However, there is a history of bad relations between the two groups of service providers. One challenge of the new organization will be to find ways to improve relations between the two groups.

The purpose of this research project is to identify existing cultural characteristics that cause or support the bad relations between the service providers, develop methods to reduce the impact of the negative cultures, and recommend new organizational characteristics that will improve the relations between the career and volunteers. This study uses the descriptive research methodology.

The research questions to be answered are:

1. What organizational conditions impede favorable relations between career and volunteer fire and rescue members?
2. What behaviors will be desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members?
3. What organizational guidelines are in place or need to be added to guide relations between career and volunteer members?
4. What do career and volunteer members identify as their expectations of the other in regard to favorable relations?
5. How do the members rate the organization in regard to trust, working conditions and morale?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Montgomery County, Maryland is situated on the northwest side of Washington D.C.. The county has a population of approximately 850,000, and has a land area of approximately 500 square miles. It is typical of many suburban areas, in that it has a diversity of people, structures and land use. The county has a range of densely populated urban type areas to sparsely populated rural areas.

The County's fire, rescue and emergency medical services are a combination career and volunteer system under the direction of a commission appointed by the County Executive. The service formally goes by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS). MCFRS came about after a reorganization of the service through County Council legislation in July 1998. A position of Fire Administrator provides the day-to-day management of the service. The Fire Administrator has full authority over all personnel (career and volunteer) and county owned assets. The career element consists of approximately 900 employees under the management of a uniformed chief in the Division of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS). DFRS provides staffing in various combinations, to the local fire departments. In addition to operational staffing, the DFRS provides various other services to the local fire departments, such as: training, dispatch, funding, budget oversight, apparatus purchase, facility construction and technology support. The volunteer element consists of approximately 750 volunteers in nineteen different incorporated local fire departments. The volunteers form a private element to the combined service and are managed by a uniformed chief in the Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services (DVFRS). The combination service responds from 33 fire and rescue stations. All members are cross-trained as Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (EMT-B). They provide Basic Life Support

on regular ambulance units strategically located throughout the county in fire stations. Advanced Life Support is provided by fire fighters cross-trained as Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedics (EMT-P) who respond on medic units strategically located throughout the county in fire stations. The career and volunteer firefighters deliver emergency operations through an integrated chain of command. The county has adapted a combination of command systems to meet its needs for on scene management.

MCFRS uses a rank classification system common to many other national fire and rescue services. Ranks range from firefighter/rescuer to chief of division. The firefighter/rescuer classification has four levels up to master firefighter/rescuer; company officers include lieutenant and captain; and the chief classifications include district, assistant, deputy and division. The volunteer division uses the same rank structure, however, in addition to firefighter/rescuers there is a separate path for emergency medical services (EMS) only. This is necessary in the volunteer ranks because there are some who are only interested in volunteering as medical members.

As a community Montgomery County has changed from being mostly agrarian in the 1940s to one as densely populated and complex as a large city. In the same time period the fire and rescue service evolved from being an all-volunteer system to a combination system where career members provide most of the services. The early eighties to mid nineties saw a drop in volunteer fire fighters and an increase in career firefighters. The drop in volunteer firefighters mirrored problems throughout the country in recruitment and retention of volunteers. (NVFC, USFA 1998, December. p. i). As the balance shifted in who delivered service the career members attempted to obtain a greater say in how the services were delivered and managed. Despite repeated appeals by the career members for more participation in the management of

the organization, the volunteers in leadership level positions retained complete power over the system. However, by not sharing the management of the services and not compromising with the strengthening career members it forced the career advocacy and labor groups to seek more revolutionary means of wresting control. One such tactic was a lawsuit to obtain back overtimes over forty hours. Since, at the time, the career members were determined by the courts to be employees of private corporations, they were entitled to receive back pay in millions of dollars. As a result, the County Government assumed the burden of this judgement and brought all career personnel under the County in a department of fire and rescue services. What resulted were the volunteers retaining power over the system, but losing management control over the career fire and rescue employees. The system was awkward but emergency services were still effectively delivered. What developed though was a widening gap in the relations between career and volunteer. In the meantime the career members continued to fight for more participation in managing the system and the volunteers continued to resist.

A complaint by Montgomery County's firefighters union, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) resulted in a ruling by the Federal Department of Labor (DOL), that said that due to restrictions in the Fair Labor Standards Act, career firefighters could not volunteer in the same jurisdiction where they worked. The decision resulted in the loss of key resources for the volunteer departments, as many career firefighters participated in the County as volunteers. This decision also impacted fire departments throughout the United States. This action resulted in worse relations between the career and volunteer members.

In 1996 the career firefighters union and the career officers organization were able to put a ballot question before Montgomery County residents asking for the County to assume

control over all fire and rescue services, personnel and assets. The citizens turned down the ballot question, but it resulted in the county reorganizing the service in a way consistent with the request of the career members.

The fire and rescue service reorganization resulted in what appears to be an effective concept for services that allows equal and fair participation of all members in a unique partnership. What remains to be accomplished is to bring about an organization that functions as one, where career and volunteer members work amenably together. To accomplish this goal, it will be necessary to determine what literature is available that discusses relations between career and volunteer members, to seek the feelings of the member groups through a survey and to interview fire and rescue leaders who may offer insight from their experience.

This research will use a variety of tasks commonly available to leaders who wish to initiate cultural change within an organization. Surveys were used to identify the perception of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue personnel in regard to career and volunteer relationships. A member survey is a significant task in the analysis of organizational culture as it helps identify the perceptions of the stakeholders for how best to accomplish changes. The determination of the stakeholders' perceptions of the organization is one way to begin the process for developing an over-all plan for changing the organization's culture. This author has the goal of using the information gained from the research to recommend methods to develop a positive work relationship between career and volunteer members.

The results of this research are significant to the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services in terms of how it will provide an understanding of members' perceptions of their work environment, relationships and their expectations of the organization. This research identifies

facts and recommendations that will assist the Department in managing a change in the relationship between career and volunteer members. The research may also be significant to other organizations as they determine their organizational culture. This research is relevant to the Executive Leadership course in that leaders often must make changes in the organization and to accomplish change it is critical to consider the assessment of the organization's culture. This research employs some tasks contained in the Assessing Organizational Culture and Managing Change modules of the Executive Leadership course.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature search was initiated at the NFA's Learning Resource Center (LRC), the Montgomery Co., Maryland Public Library, the author's personal library with the goal of discovering literature and completed research that could open up some new ways of thinking about career and volunteer relations. The author used personal theories about the existing relations between the career and volunteer members of the organization. Some of these theories included: that leadership was a key to success, or a reason for failed relations; that work relations needed to improve if the organization would be successful; that most members would buy into a process of relational improvement if properly approached; that the members themselves would provide good ideas about what was wrong and what could be done to improve relations and that there would be ample literature available on the subject. The research questions were developed to focus on these areas. Some of the challenges for the new organization include how to bring together over 20 independent organizations, how to bring about a single framework for managing the organization and clearly the most challenging, how to close the gap between career and volunteer firefighters.

As a research approach, several key search words were used for a database query.

The key words for this research included: career firefighter, change, leadership, volunteer firefighter, combination fire departments, corporate culture, work relations, volunteerism, volunteer incentive programs, working conditions, morale, etc..

The author performed a search query of the National Fire Academy Learning Resource Center reference database and discovered a substantial base of literature on the keyword search. The literature fell into a range of periodical articles, books and Applied Research Projects (APR). Due to a wide range of literature the author narrowed the scope of the search to areas directly related to combination departments; volunteer retention and recruitment issues; organizational leadership and working conditions.

Combination Departments

There were many articles available about combination departments. Most were about single departments discussing their experience in making the organization cost- effective through the use of combination staffing. Some of the literature on combination departments related to merging organizations together. Montgomery County's reorganization is truly a merger so special attention was given to this literature area. The literature indicates that mergers are becoming more common and create significant challenges. Discussion on combination departments provided insight into developing a vision of where Montgomery needs to be in the area of improving work relations. There are obvious trends that have driven much of the change from all volunteer departments to combination department. Some of these include increase in call load as population increases training and certification demands and occupational health requirements. Traditionally, rural and small town residents worked close to the area where they

lived and volunteered now these people commute many miles to work leaving little time left in their day besides work and travel. A front-page story in the *Washington Post* in January 1999 talked about the decline of the volunteer firefighter. Volunteer fire Chief Bruce Phillips of Auburn, New Hampshire said, “The days of the pure volunteer are coming to an end. Its a gradual evolution but it’s already happening.” (Grunwald, 1999). The article estimates that volunteers, who comprise approximately 75% of the nation’s firefighters have declined by 8% since the 1980s (Grunwald, 1999). These declines in membership, especially in small towns and suburban areas, have caused communities to become more reliant on a combination of career-volunteer members in fire departments. This transition to delivering services through a combination approach must be planned carefully and implemented gradually (Marinucci, 1990).

Two applied research papers (ARP) were located at the National Fire Academy Learning Resource Center (LRC) addressing the migration from volunteer to combination career-volunteer departments. The two papers emphasized the economy of combination departments and indicate that significant savings will be gained by supplementing career forces with volunteers. Economy was also emphasized in the Montgomery County legislation in the following, “The Council recognizes and respects the contributions of volunteers over many decades which have resulted not only in the protection of life and property in the County but also vital and generous support for an essential public activity.” (Montgomery County, Maryland, 1998). While literature relates the cost savings, there is frequently an inability to pin down either the actual savings volunteers provide, or the actual increase if their services are not available. This conflict was evident in a report describing the reorganization of the Anne Arundel

County, Maryland Fire Department. Neither side of the argument about the cost savings of volunteers could agree on a way to determine the savings.

Leadership, Key to Success

The literature strongly and frequently asserts that leadership is the key to the success of the combination fire department. “Career or volunteer, the chief sets the tone for the relationship between the members.” (Stern, 1997). The need for the leader to create the supportive and fair culture for all members is a factor in the success of combination departments. (Potter, 1994). Further, the leader must be committed to building cohesiveness between the two membership groups. (McDermott, 1996). The effective organizations were reported as those where leaders had confidence in the members, relied on their input and judge on merit of the situation not whether it involved career or volunteer members (McDermott, 1996).

The leader in Montgomery County’s Fire and Rescue Service will play the key role molding the organizational culture. The vision and influence the leader imparts on the organization will need to be strategically planned, continuously enacted and be supported through and by all levels of leadership to effectively change the relations. “Leadership must be pro-active to meet the needs and expectations of both [career and volunteer] groups while building an esprit de corps.” (Rielage, 1993).

Characteristics of a Successful Organization

The characteristics of any successful organization, are the same characteristics that will make a combination fire and rescue organization successful. The leaders of effective organizations enabled positive and open communications and “fostered the attitude that all

personnel set goals, and all personnel were important.” (McDermott, 1996). One article spoke of the communications processes that should be present. Here is a point where strategy and leadership come into play. “Intradepartmental communication has been improved by a city-sponsored retreat for volunteer and career firefighters. It included fire department administration, the personnel director, and the city manager’s top staff.” (Rastikis, 1987). This showed leadership, commitment and participation of the organization’s managers.

Encouragement of communications and other commonality between the groups could lead to effective team building. In addition to communicating leader’s vision, it is important to seek the feedback that members might provide through surveys, suggestion programs and hotlines in regard to working conditions and morale. There needs to be a way to answer questions and concerns, confirm and deny rumors, and generally keep in touch with the feel of the organization. “Information must flow in all directions within the organizational structure.” (Sullivan, 1997).

Finding reasons to get groups together in work and communication situations appears to be at least one logical way to build the team. “The key element in any of these systems is that the individuals, career and [volunteer] paid part-time, must be trained on a team approach so that each can feel comfortable with each other, and know what is expected of them.” (Rielage, 1993). Mr. Rielage refers to paid-on-call members who are part time firefighters. It is not important what role the paid-on-call firefighters occupy, it is the fact that the organization is essentially a combination department. The essence of the team-training concept is part of communicating throughout the organization and members becoming comfortable working with each other. In a personal interview with former volunteer chief Peter West, of Fairfax County,

Virginia, he described the effectiveness of the combination system Fairfax enjoyed under Chief Warren Isman. Chief West indicated that the model Isman created, and that West believes is critical, focuses on three elements. 1) The person at the top must have the conviction to make sure the system works as a combination. 2) The system must have a truly integrated command structure. 3) To be credible in such a system, volunteers must be similarly trained as the career.

Team Building

The team concept is another common theme in articles addressing combination department issues. Chief Richard Marinucci speaks to the team concept from his experience. “The fire service depends on teamwork. If both groups are to operate together on emergencies, they should work and train together during times of less pressure and stress. Career and volunteer firefighters can develop healthy respect for each other and learn to work out their differences.” (Marinucci, 1990). Marinucci also indicated that those (career or volunteer) not wishing to participate as a team should be helped to realize that there is no place in the organization for them (Marinucci, 1990).

Experience from a Neighboring County

Anne Arundel County, Maryland performed a study of their fire and rescue service, which like Montgomery County is a combination service serving a similar suburban makeup. Their report evaluated many areas of how to effectively provide a combination service. The following bullets provide an overview of some recommendations aimed at improving the work environment:

- Make participation easier and less frustrating for volunteers by reestablishing a volunteer coordinator’s position.

- Require career and volunteer members to take an annual job-skills related physical qualification test.
- Establish a discipline and grievance procedure for volunteers that parallel the career procedure.
- In the chain of command the volunteer company chief should be senior to career captains but subordinate to career battalion chiefs.
- Adopt the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard 1021, Fire Officer Professional Qualifications and require these as the qualification standards for career and volunteer members of equal rank.
- Retain a Fire Advisory Board with a change to the appointed members to assure equal membership of three career members, three volunteer members and three civilians with no current connection to the career or volunteer fire service (Anne Arundel County, Maryland, 1994).

The recommendations offer an attempt by Anne Arundel to provide parity in managing the combination department. It recognizes the contributions of the volunteers and their current barriers to service but also addresses concerns for requirements and demands of a modern fire and rescue organization.

Standards and Qualifications

Consistency in training standards, certification and qualification are a common theme in much of the literature. Literature recommends that to be a successful and credible combination service volunteers and career members must meet the same qualifications “All members performing the

same job should meet the same level of training. All firefighters must know the job equally well – whether receiving compensation or not.” (Stern, 1997). “...establish standards for both career and volunteer officers. Personnel can better accept orders from people whom they feel have received proper and sufficient training and have achieved a standard of excellence in the profession.” (Marinucci, 1990). While the larger challenge of training and qualifications standards can be seen mostly to affect volunteers, it is fair to assert that a changing mission would necessitate the higher level of requirements.

Organizational Culture

In order to improve the relations between career and volunteers in a combination department the leader must understand and appreciate the influence of corporate culture. Assessing organizational culture is a module in the NFA Executive Leadership course and culture was referenced in several articles in the literature search. The following quote provides a strong statement for how challenging it may be to improve the relations between career and volunteers and identifies how important culture is. “...culture is subject to development and change because of the learning going on within the organization. Because existing basic assumptions do not change readily, such change is normally incremental and evolutionary rather than radical and revolutionary—in other words, culture is fairly resistant to major change, especially in the short run.” (NFA, 1996. P. SM 7-5.). The fire department may also be a component of a larger cultural influence, or host culture, such as the community as an informal entity, the fire department as a formal component of the city or local government, etc. (Cook, 1990). A negative or dysfunctional organizational culture can damage or destroy the

organization (Cook, 1990). “Real change only can occur if the leader successfully “unfreezes” the old assumptions and then “refreezes” them into the subconscious of the culture. The degree of success in this process depends on the leader’s vision and dedication.” (Cook, 1990). Cook goes on to describe that complete cultural dysfunction in the organization may require destruction of the old organization and start over (Cook, 1990).

Defining Roles and Expectations

Another important organizational concept that may help frame relations in the combination system is the definition of roles and expectations of all members. Jeff Stern’s article recommends the following. “Job descriptions should be clearly defined. Responsibilities should be clearly laid out for all members of the department, whether paid or volunteer. All members should know a clearly delineated formal organizational structure. This will help guide members in their daily interactions.” (Stern, 1997). Covey writes, “The cause of almost all relationship difficulties is rooted in conflicting or ambiguous expectations around roles and goals. Whether we are dealing with the question of who does what at work, how you communicate with your daughter when you tell her to clean her room, or who feeds the fish and takes out the trash, we can be certain that unclear expectations will lead to misunderstanding, disappointment, and withdrawals of trust.” (Covey, 1989, P. 194–195). Covey also places high value in the work you put into expectations on the front end, as savings of time and effort down the road. (1989, p.195).

PROCEDURES

The research procedure used in preparing this paper consisted of a literature review that was conducted initially at the Learning Resource Center at the National Emergency Training

Center in February 1999. Additional literature review was conducted between March and April 1999 at the Montgomery County Public Library in Rockville, Maryland, and the author's personal library.

Personal interviews were conducted with Chief David Dwyer, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services and Peter West, former Volunteer Chief, Fair Oaks Fire Department, Virginia.

Sample

Names of all 923 uniform and non-uniform employees (here-on identified as members) of the DFRS Operations Bureau and 1,249 volunteer members of the DVFRS, as listed on the County's Integrated Emergency Command System were entered into separate Micro Soft Excel spreadsheets to assist in administrative coordination of the survey. The data for each member contained last name, first name, rank and station number. Each name occupied a separate numbered line. The lines were numbered in a stepping sequence beginning with the number 1. The numbering sequence would assist in randomly choosing the sample to be surveyed. This author decided that the sample for each of the two member groups would be 100 (200 total). If all surveys returned, 200 was a number that could be reasonably managed based on past applied research projects and considering the limitation of six months to turn in the ARP. To choose the sample the author used a random process of assigning numbers that would match the number corresponding with each member's spreadsheet line number. For the process of randomizing the numbers this author used the *Research Randomizer* available on the internet at <http://www.randomizer.org>. "*Research Randomizer* is a free service offered to

students and researchers interested in conducting random assignment and random sampling.”

The following procedure was used to determine who would be part of the sample study group.

Step 1. Using *Research Randomizer* enter how many numbers per set (100), and the number range (1 to 923 career), (1 to 1246 volunteer), and press the “Randomize Now” button. The program produces a list of randomized numbers within seconds in a format that the researcher may print out for use. This process was done once for volunteers and once for career. Mark the member group identity on the random number prints out so as to know which sample groups it represents.

Step 2. Using the appropriate member list, and the corresponding member spreadsheet, choose the first number on the random list then match it and mark the number on the spreadsheet. Continue the matching process until all numbers in the set (100) are matched to a number on the spreadsheet.

Step 3. Save each of the spreadsheets under a new file name so the data can be configured for a final list of the 2 samples. Using the highlight and cut, editing feature, eliminate any data entry that was not chosen using a random number. This narrowed each list of a final sample down to 2 lists of 100 each. The lists would identify members who would receive a survey.

Survey

A survey was constructed consisting of questions requiring specific respondent choices and questions asking for specific member comments. A copy of the survey and the transmittal memo are exhibited in Appendix A. The survey transmittal memo was provided to each member chosen to participate in the survey and explained the objective of the research, possible benefits to the member and assurance of personal privacy. The author wanted to draw on the

member's experience and obtain their recommendations and comments regarding what is wrong and how can the system be improved. The survey was written to specifically to address the research questions posed in this project. The primary elements of the research survey were:

Survey section A addressed organizational conditions that may impede favorable relations between career and volunteer members. This section had 14 questions that the member would provide programmed responses such as never, sometimes, always. Some questions were specifically asked of one or the other membership group.

Survey section B asked the members to list 5 short statements that describe behaviors that were desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members.

Survey section C asked the members to describe their thoughts on what guidelines were needed or were already in place that guide relations between the career and volunteer members. The author envisioned these statements as possible credo statements, organizational values, or actual relational etiquette for the members to follow.

Survey section D asked members to identify their group's expectations of the other in regard to favorable relations. This question asked for the description of 3 expectations.

Survey section E asked the members to rate the organization in regard to trust, working conditions and morale by choosing one of four programmed choices, including strongly

disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree. At the end of the survey the members had an opportunity to provide any additional comments they felt were appropriate.

Analysis of Data

Out of the 200 surveys sent to members 64 (approximately 32%) were returned; 41 were career (21%), and 23 were volunteer (11%). The data were compiled and entered into spreadsheet and word processing format, then analyzed to determine what the data meant and if any patterns emerged.

Limitations

The survey had several limitations. It was assumed that all respondents would provide their true feelings about the questions asked. Furthermore, it was assumed that the respondents understood the questions. Neither of the assumptions could be confirmed.

The study was too small relative to guidelines on obtaining confidence in the data. The Research Module for the EFO Executive Development course indicates that when performing randomly chosen samples that to assure a 95% confidence level you must send out significantly more surveys than you really expect to be able to use. While this may have been an error in statistical judgement, the constraints on time and resources for compiling the data justified (in the author's mind) the risk. This author feels there was positive benefits obtained from the data received in feedback from the population surveyed, despite the small sample.

It is unclear why there was such a small return on volunteer surveys. However, some reasons may include the author/researcher is a career member and this affiliation may be suspect to the volunteer, the volunteer members chose not to respond due to concerns of confidentiality,

the volunteers may not have received the surveys until after The latter problem may have come from the list the author used. The IECS may not provide the most active list of volunteers. A better list would have been the list of volunteers to receive activity points for Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP). LOSAP is a more realistic indicator of volunteer activity as it specifically indicates a level of volunteer activity for specific members.

The survey did not receive benefit of a trial run to determine if there were poorly written questions. In addition the author observed numerous occasions throughout the responses where respondents did not answer the programmed response, wrote in a response of their own or chose two programmed responses. This problem led to eliminating those specific responses, as it could not be determined exactly what to observe from the response. Response problems such as these could be due to not testing the survey prior to formal presentation to the membership groups. In analyzing the results the author kept with the whole member group size of returned surveys to represent 100% when determining percentages of the responses.

RESULTS

This study analyzed the survey responses of sixty-four fire and rescue members, career and volunteer, of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. The analysis and interpretation of data reviewed the following areas: 1) organizational conditions that impede favorable relations; 2) behaviors desirable to enhance relations; 3) existing or new organizational guidelines to direct relations; 4) identification of expectations in regard to favorable relations; 5) members rating the organization in regard to trust, working conditions and morale.

1) What organizational conditions impede favorable relations between career and volunteer fire and rescue members?

To determine if there were any organizational barriers to favorable relations a series of questions were asked. The questions ranged from perceptions about the organization, to personal commitment for good relations. Respondents were asked to choose the best answer to the question. The following tables and textual description of results provide a breakdown of the responses in total responses and percent of the membership responding.

Support for the Combination System (Table 1) - The data indicates that there is moderate support for the combination system. One positive sign though is the very low number of responses in the never category. On average 5% of the respondents indicated that they never perceived support for the combination system. Additional value can be realized in that respondents indicated that they could in fact identify specific areas in the organization that are barriers to relations. Some of these barriers were captured as comments in the survey questions that requested specific examples.

A closer look at the responses indicates the following. Responses to organizational support for the combination system that the organizations mostly support the system with - volunteers 57% (13) sometimes, and 43% (10) always, career totals of 49% (20) sometimes, and 44% (18) always. Volunteer responses provide that their leaders more frequently communicated the importance of supporting the combination system. 52% (12) of the respondents indicated leaders always communicate the importance and 43% (10) indicated the importance. Only 1 volunteer indicated the leaders never communicated the importance of the combination system. Career members said their leaders only sometimes communicated the importance of a combination system 49% (20), while 37% (15) stated the leaders always

communicated the importance. Four career members (10%) said they never heard the importance communicated.

Table 1 - Perception of Support for the Combination System

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
Organization's support for the combination system.	Never Sometimes Always	0 13 (57%) 10 (43%)	1 (2%) 20 (49%) 18 (44%)
Organization's leaders communicate the importance of supporting a combination system.	Never Sometimes Always	1 (5%) 10 (43%) 12 (52%)	4 (10%) 20 (49%) 15 (37%)
Career member respondents see the volunteer members as supporting the combination system.	Never Sometimes Always	Not Applicable	3 (7%) 33 (80%) 3 (7%)
Volunteer member respondents see the career members as supporting the combination system.	Never Sometimes Always	1 (5%) 17 (74%) 5 (21%)	Not Applicable
Respondents can identify specific areas in organizational structures (rules, laws, and practices) which negatively affect relations between career and volunteer members.	Yes No	14 (60%) 9 (39%)	24 (59%) 12 (29%)

Members were asked how they saw the other membership group in regard to supporting the combination system and responded as follows. Career members only sometimes saw the volunteer members as supporting the combination system, 80% (33) responded in this fashion. Only 7% (3) saw the volunteers as always supporting and 7% (3) replied that the volunteers never supported the system. Similarly of the volunteers, 74% (17) only felt the career sometimes supported the combination system. Five (21%) responded that the career always supported the system and 1 volunteer felt the career never supported the system.

Table 2 - Perception of Leader's Interest in Good Work Relations

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
Career member respondents feel that the career leaders care	Never	Not	1 (2%)

that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.	Sometimes Always	Applicable	30 (73%) 8 (20%)
Career member respondents feel that the volunteer leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.	Never Sometimes Always	Not Applicable	6 (15%) 31 (76%) 2 (5%)
Volunteer member respondents feel that the career leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.	Never Sometimes Always	1 (5%) 18 (78%) 4 (17%)	Not Applicable
Volunteer member respondents feel that the volunteer leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.	Never Sometimes Always	0 18 (78%) 5 (21%)	Not Applicable

Leader Interest in Good Work Relations (Table 2) - In measuring member's perception of whether their leaders care about the relations between career and volunteers, the indications are again only moderate responses. As the literature indicated the leadership function is critical to the success of combination departments. If respondents are more likely to provide responses that leaders only sometimes indicate that they care, then this can be a problem. The data indicated that career members only felt that the leaders sometimes care, 73% (30) indicated this. Career members always felt leaders cared 20% (8) of the time. One career member indicated the leaders never cared. With similar percentages 78% (18) volunteer respondents indicated that their leaders sometimes cared, 21% (5) indicating that the leaders always cared. One volunteer felt the leaders never cared. When asked the same question about the opposite group the same pattern was exhibited. Career indicated that 76% (31) of the time volunteer leaders cared about work relations, however, 15% (6) felt the volunteers never care, and 5% (2) felt volunteers always care. The volunteer respondents exhibited a more positive indication of the counterpart's leaders with 78% (18) indicating that career leaders cared about

work relations, 17% (4) always care and only 1 respondent, (5%) felt the career did not care.

Again a positive in a negative, is that there were low response indications that leaders never indicate that they care.

Table 3 - Perception of Treatment by the Other Member Group

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
Volunteer member respondents feel they are treated well by career members.	Never Sometimes Always	1 (5%) 14 (60%) 7 (30%)	Not Applicable
Career member respondents feel they are treated well by volunteer members.	Never Sometimes Always	Not Applicable	1 (3%) 29 (71%) 9 (21%)

Treatment by Other Member Group (Table 3) - Career and volunteer members

were asked the question of how they were generally treated by the other member group. Again only a moderate indication of good treatment. Again, more specific comments would be discovered on comments by the respondents. There was majority of responses indicating that only some of the time were members treated well. Only 30% (7) volunteer respondents and 21% (9) career respondents indicating they were always treated well. As a limitation it may be difficult to determine what the range of sometimes means. This will require further evaluation.

Support for the Law and Commitment to Follow Leadership (Table 4) - Members

were asked if they were aware of and support the law establishing the combination system. These questions resulted in more positive sign that at least people understand the legislated intent, and if their direct member group and advocacy groups lead in a positive way, the members too would support the combination system. Indicating support, 96% (22) of volunteer members answered yes, with one volunteer not answering the question. A majority of the career

also indicated support for the law, with 73% (30) members answering yes and 22% (9) answering no. Two career members did not answer. A strong majority of the career members indicated they would follow their lead fire service organization 88% (36), and their advocacy group 85% (35) if they endorsed and supported the combination system. Disagreeing, 7% (3) and 10% (4) indicated that they would not follow the lead of these organizations if they supported the system. Volunteers unanimously 100% (23) indicated they would follow the lead of their organizations.

Table 4 - Support for the Law and Commitment to Follow Leadership

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
I am aware and support the County law establishing the delivery of EMS, Fire and Rescue services through an equal partnership of career and volunteer members.	Yes No	22 (96%) 0	30 (73%) 9 (22%)
Respondents indicated they would follow the lead of their fire service organization (DFRS, Local FD) if the organization endorses and supports the combination service.	Yes No	23 (100%) 0	36 (88%) 3 (7%)
Respondents state they will follow the lead of their fire advocacy organization (County Volunteer Association, Local 1664, and Career Officers) if they endorse and support the combination service.	Yes No	23 (100%) 0	35 (85%) 4 (10%)

2) What behaviors will be desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members? (Table 2).

This research question offered an opportunity for respondents to provide their comments and recommendations in regard to behaviors that may enhance relations. The responses were indexed into a list and are included in entirety as Appendix B. Responses provided what the organization should require of the members as opposed to very specific behaviors. For the result section an analysis of the several hundred responses was performed these were then

categorized into major organization areas and documented with the number of occurrences, in which respondents made a statement that fit into the major area.

Table 5: General Organizational Behavior Area

General Organizational Behavior Area	Volunteer	Career
Consistent requirements of training, education and performance.	37	45
Consistent organizational regulatory practices to guide career and volunteer members.	12	21
Members need to exhibit self-discipline and be accountable for performance, behavior and image.	6	9
Provide clear organizational expectations of roles and responsibilities to guide behavior.	3	16
Effective organizational and inter-relational communications, problem solving and conflict resolution.	3	12
Effective team building, maintenance of trust and respect, and commitment to standards of inter-relational decency.	11	8
Engage in opportunities for integrated group activities	22	7
Show commitment to serve the citizens.	0	9
Acknowledge significantly career delivery of the services	0	4
Understand volunteer contribution and how they fit into the scheme of service delivery	12	0
Make it easier for volunteers to be a part of the service group and to enjoy more equitable riding assignments	2	0

After many of the same major areas, such as, training, accountability and rules were repeated, smaller numbers of original suggestions were provided. Some of the lesser-numbered suggestions had more impact on one group than the other. The individual statements were listed alone if they could not be categorized and appeared to have relevance. As a result of the way respondents answered question B the comments relative to desirable behaviors coincide with what question C asked relative to organizational guidelines. In answer to the research question, Table 5 provides the major areas and the frequency in which the respondents identified the behavior.

3) What organizational guidelines are in place or need to be added to guide relations between career and volunteer members?

In requesting comments on the need for new, or identifying existing guidelines to direct relations, the respondents provided similar comments as they did in question B. As in the responses to question B the author categorized the responses into general organizational statements. A list of statements is provided in Table 6. Again these results are compiled in the table and a total number of times indicated by the respondents is provided. The complete list of comments for question C is contained in Appendix B.

Table 6: Directing Relations Through Organizational Guidelines

General Organizational Behavior Area	Volunteer	Career
Consistent requirements of training, education and performance.	5	17
Consistent organizational regulatory practices to guide career and volunteer members.	3	3
Members need to exhibit self-discipline and be accountable for performance, behavior and image.	6	8
Develop performance and service delivery goals to guide the workload of all members.	0	2
Establish and maintain appropriate staffing levels.	0	1
Establish a code of decency and respect.	9	1
Provide clear organizational expectations of roles and responsibilities to guide behavior.	1	1
Develop a means to formally bring a representative group for all members to discuss and solve problems and concerns.	0	2
Provide for equal participation in the planning and management of facilities and resources.	2	2
Establish and require one uniform standard.	0	1
Recognize the realities of who provides service and formally vest a higher authority to career over volunteers.	0	16
Provide for central purchasing and asset management	0	1
Establish a criteria for displaying organizational symbols (signs, decals, patches, etc.) on apparatus, stations and uniforms	0	6
Engage in opportunities for integrated group activities	2	6
Establish a commitment to serve the citizens through a combined service, includes a true commitment to integrate the member groups	13	10
Establish a mechanism to better match members to the type of station assigned. Some members better suited staying with their own	1	0
Understand volunteer contribution and how they fit into the scheme of service delivery	9	0
Establish a means to integrate volunteers into the company and provide for equitable riding assignments	2	0

4) What do career and volunteer members identify as their expectations of the other in regard to favorable relations?

Response to the question relating to the member's expectations of the other group resulted again in acutely similar responses as experienced in questions B and C. Comments were demonstrative in favor of consistent standards for training, experience and performance. Consistency in regard to accountability, rules and guidelines and team building were also frequently mentioned. Another expectation in almost all areas of service delivery is the call by both career and volunteers for equal treatment, respect and the expectation that all members will pull their fair share. A full list of comments is provided in Appendix B.

5) How do the members rate the organization in regard to trust, working conditions and morale?

The author felt that it would be important to assess areas of the organization that regardless of the make-up of the membership would be important to overall effectiveness and productivity. This author performed a similar assessment in looking at the organization in a 1997 ARP. However, at that time only the career was surveyed. What was troublesome at that time was some considerably high levels of distrust and a lack of confidence among co-workers. Those conditions seemed to have improved since then and may be a result of a change in leadership, and reorganization. Overall the results of this research question indicate that trust, working conditions and morale are in good shape. None-the-less, indications provided in written comments to the survey would assert that leaders need to continue to work toward solving some of the concerns especially in communicating organizational vision, mission and values.

As in question A not all career members contributed answers to question E, or they inserted their own answer. Two respondents consistently did this throughout the survey.

Trust/Confidence (Table 7) - A series of six questions were related to trust and confidence. The first three related to confidence. Relative to the member's confidence in co-worker's capability 76% (31) career members indicated they had confidence in their co-workers. Only 17% (7) disagreed that they had confidence in their co-workers. The majority 57% (13) of volunteer members also agreed they had confidence in their co-workers. However, the volunteers had a higher response of strongly agreed 30% (7) in their co-workers than did the career 2% (1). Volunteers 13% (3) disagreed, or lacked confidence in their co-workers. Career members expressed a 56% (23) confidence rating in their company officers, 15% (6) expressed strong confidence, with 22% (7) members expressing a lack of confidence, and 2% (1) saying they strongly lacked confidence in their company officers. Volunteers expressed a much higher rating of confidence in their officers with 91% (21) responding in agreement 61% (14) and strongly agree 30% (7).

Table 7: Confidence in Capabilities

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
E2. I am confident in the capabilities of the coworkers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree	30% (7)	2% (1)
	Agree	57% (13)	76% (31)
	Disagree	13% (3)	17% (7)
	Strongly Disagree	0	0
E3. I am confident in the capabilities of the company officers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree	30% (7)	15% (6)
	Agree	61% (14)	56% (23)
	Disagree	4% (1)	22% (9)
	Strongly Disagree		2% (1)
E4. I am confident in the capabilities of the chief level officers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree	30% (7)	12% (5)
	Agree	61% (14)	66% (27)
	Disagree	0	17% (7)
	Strongly Disagree	0	0

Only 4% (1) member expressed a strong lack of confidence in their company officers. Career members indicated they were confident in their chief level officers, with 12% (5) strongly agreeing and 66% (27) agreeing. 17% (7) lacked confidence in their chief level officers. Volunteers expressed only confidence in their chief level officers with 30% (7) reporting they strongly agreed and 61% (14) agreeing.

Trusting Co-workers and Officers (Table 8) - Career members rating the level of trust they held in co-workers of their member group indicated that the majority 78% (32) trusted their co-workers. 10% (4) strongly agreed and 68% (28) agreed. A lack of trusted was indicated by 17% (7) of the career members with 15% (6) disagreeing and 2% (1) strongly disagreeing. Volunteer members indicated a strong sense of trust for their co-workers with 92% (21) indicating in this way. Only 8% (2) of volunteers responding indicated that they

distrusted their co-workers. In regard to trust for their company officers, 80% (33) of career members indicated positively, with 7% (3) strongly agreeing

Table 8: Trusting Co-workers and Officers

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
E5. I trust the coworkers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	35% (8) 57% (13) 8% (2) 0	10% (4) 68% (28) 15% (6) 2% (1)
E6. I trust the company officers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	26% (6) 65% (15) 4% (1) 0	7% (3) 73% (30) 15% (6) 0
E7. I trust the chief level officers in my member (Career/Volunteer) group.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	35% (8) 52% (12) 4% (1) 0	12% (5) 68% (28) 17% (7) 2% (1)
E10. I feel that people trust each other in the (MCFRS) organization.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	0 48% (11) 30% (7) 17% (4)	0 39% (16) 59% (24) 2% (1)
E11. I feel people trust our leaders.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	4% (1) 57% (13) 35% (8) 0	2% (1) 51% (21) 44% (18) 2% (1)

and 73% (30) agreeing. Fifteen-career members (6) indicated they did not trust their company officers. Volunteers again responded positively in regard to trust for their company officers, with 26% (6) strongly agreeing and 65% (15) agreeing. Only 1 volunteer (4%) indicated distrust for their company officer. A majority of career members indicated they trusted their chief level officer, with 80% (33) reporting positively. Seventeen percent of the career members indicated distrust for their chief level officers. Volunteer members reported they trusted their chief level officers with 85% (20) respondents indicating they either strongly, or moderately agreed. Only 1 volunteer member (4%) indicated they did not trust their chief level officers.

In looking for an overall feeling of trust throughout MCFRS, members were asked to agree or disagree to the following “I feel that people trust each other in the (MCFRS) organization.” A majority of the career members 61% (25) indicated they did not feel people trusted each other. Only 39% (16) of the career respondents indicated that there was overall trust. Volunteer responses were close to an even draw with a total of 47% (11) responses in the negative, 4 (17%) strongly disagreed and 7 (30%) disagreed. Within a balance of just one percentile the volunteer members 48% (11) agreed that there was trust. One member (5%) did not supply a response. In response to people trusting their leaders, career members were close to even between agreement and disagreement with 53% (22) agreeing and 46% (19) disagreeing. Volunteer positive responses were a little higher than career with 61% (14) agreeing and 35% (8) disagreeing. One volunteer (4%) did not respond.

Working Conditions: General (Table 9) - To get a gauge for working conditions in MCFRS several questions were asked of the members relating to how they saw the organization. The first statement indicated that the whole MCFRS was a better organization than it was two years prior. This was almost one year after the reorganization. The respondents were to provide positive (agree) or negative (disagree) responses to the statement. A majority of the career members 68% (28) agreed, with 7% (3) strongly agreeing and 61% (25) agreeing. There were 26% (11) career members who disagreed. Volunteer members were more balanced in their responses with 43% (10) disagreeing and 47% (11) agreeing. Two members (10%) did not respond. In comparing MCFRS with other jurisdictions in the region members were asked to agree or disagree that the organization is as good or better than others. Career members responded in agreement with 75% (31) and 22% (9) disagreeing. One career member did not

respond. The volunteers responded with a positive 96% (22) agreeing. One member (4%) did not respond. In response to the statement that recent changes to the MCFRS made it a better place to work or volunteer member's responses were throughout the scale of agreement

Table 9: Working Conditions - General

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
E1. The whole Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service is better now than it was 2 years ago.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	4% (1) 43% (10) 35% (8) 8% (2)	7% (3) 61% (25) 24% (10) 2% (1)
E8. I feel our organization is as good or better than those in jurisdictions in our region.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	57% (13) 39% (9) 0 0	7% (3) 68% (28) 17% (7) 5% (2)
E9. I feel that recent changes in the MCFRS makes it a better place to work/volunteer.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	9% (2) 52% (12) 17% (4) 13% (3)	10% (4) 68% (28) 15% (6) 2% (1)

and disagreement. Career members who strongly agreed numbered 10% (4). Those who agreed numbered 68% (28). Eight- percent (8) of the career members disagreed. Volunteer members had a higher level of disagreement with 30% (7) disagreeing. Volunteers who agreed that the organization was a better place to volunteer in numbered 61% (14). Two volunteer members (9%) did not respond.

Working Conditions: Safety, Welfare and Comfort (Table 10) - In a separate area of working conditions the survey focused questions on safety, welfare and comfort. Members were asked to agree or disagree that MCFRS is concerned about the safety and welfare of its

members. Career members responded mostly positive, with 71% (29) indicating they agreed with the statement and 29% (12) disagreeing. Volunteers were even more positive with 82% (19) agreeing and only 13% (3) disagreeing. In response to the statement that MCFRS is safer than most EMS, fire and rescue

Table 10: Working Conditions - Safety, Welfare and Comfort

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
E12. I feel the MCFRS is concerned about the safety and welfare of the members	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	39% (9) 43% (10) 13% (3) 0	10% (4) 61% (25) 27% (11) 2% (1)
E13. I feel MCFRS is a safer organization than most EMS, Fire and Rescue organizations.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	35% (8) 48% (11) 4% (1) 0	2% (1) 71% (29) 20% (8) 2% (1)
E14. I can name three programs that actively address the safety of the members.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	17% (4) 57% (13) 26% (6) 0	10% (4) 71% (29) 15% (6) 0
E15. The facilities that house the MCFRS members are safe.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	26% (6) 74% (17) 4% (1) 0	15% (6) 56% (23) 27% (11) 2% (1)
E16. The facilities that house the MCFRS members are comfortable and adequate to meet our needs.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	17% (4) 74% (17) 13% (3) 0	5% (2) 61% (25) 37% (15) 0

organizations 73% (30) career members agreed, with 22% (9) members disagreeing. Two career members (5%) did not respond. Only 4% (1) of volunteer members disagreed, with 83% (19) agreeing. Three volunteer members (13%) did not respond. When asked if the members could agree or disagree to the statement that they could name three programs that

actively address safety 81% (33) career members agreed with only 15% (6) disagreeing. Volunteer members agreeing totaled 74% (17) and 26% (6) disagreeing. A majority of the career members 71% (29) agreed that the facilities housing the members were safe. Career members disagreeing totaled 29% (12). All volunteer members agreed that facilities were safe with 26% (6) strongly agreeing and 74% (17) agreeing. In response to the statement that the facilities are comfortable and adequate to meet needs 66% (27) career members agreed, while 37% (15) disagreed. Volunteer members agreed with 91% (21) agreeing and 9% (2) disagreeing.

Morale (Table 11) - The following results were obtained from 6 questions asked of the members to try to get a sense of the morale of the organizations. In response to the statement regarding fairness in personnel actions 68% (28) career members provided negative responses. Only 33% (14) career members responded positively that they felt they were treated fairly. Volunteers on the other hand were more positive and agreed 66% (15) of the time that they were treated fairly. Volunteers disagreed 35% (8) of the time. Only 58% (24) career members feel they have the opportunity to participate in the organization and provide input on concerns. Career members, who disagreed and felt they did not have opportunities to participate, number 41% (17). Volunteer members who agreed that they were provided opportunity to participate numbered 61% (14), while 30% (7) disagreed. In regard to benefits and compensation career members seem mostly satisfied with 73% (30) members responding positively (agreement) and 25% (10) members disagreeing. One career member did not respond. Volunteer members also mostly felt positive toward benefits, with 57% (13) agreeing and 35% (8) disagreeing. Two volunteer members (8%) did not respond. Asked to agree or

disagree that the members were proud to be an EMS, fire and rescue service provider all but four respondents career and volunteer agreed. On the career side 44% (18)

Table 11: Morale

Question	Response Type	Volunteer	Career
E17. I feel personnel (career/volunteer) actions, hiring, member recruitment, elections and promotions are fairly administered	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	9% (2) 57% (13) 35% (8) 0	2% (1) 31% (13) 46% (19) 22% (9)
E18. I feel that the MCFRS provides me the opportunity to participate in the organization and for input on my concerns.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	13% (3) 48% (11) 26% (6) 4% (1)	2% (1) 56% (23) 39% (16) 2% (1)
E19. I feel MCFRS members (career/volunteer) receive appropriate benefits and compensation.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	9% (2) 48% (11) 26% (6) 9% (2)	0 73% (30) 20% (8) 5% (2)
E20. I am proud to be an EMS, Fire and Rescue service provider.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	74% (17) 30% (7) 0 0	44% (18) 51% (21) 5% (2) 0
E21. I am proud to be a member of MCFRS.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	52% (12) 39% (9) 9% (2) 0	32% (13) 59% (24) 10% (4) 0
E22. I feel the MCFRS and all associated member organizations promote diversity and fair treatment of its members.	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree	30% (7) 43% (10) 9% (2) 4% (1)	10% (4) 44% (18) 37% (15) 7% (3)

strongly agreed and 51% (21) agreed. Two career members (5%) indicated they were not proud to be an EMS, fire or rescue service provider. All Volunteers 94% (21), who responded agreed that they were proud. Two volunteers (6%) did not respond. In response to the statement of pride to be an MCFRS member again the majority agreed. Career members totaling 91% (37) indicated they were proud they were MCFRS members while 9% (4) were not proud and disagreed with the statement. Like the career 91% (21) of the volunteer

respondents agreed that they were proud to be members of MCFRS and 9% (2) members disagreed. A wide range of comments was received in response to the statement that MCFRS and all associated member organizations promoted diversity and fair treatment. Career members totaling 54% (22) agreed, but 44% (18) disagreed. Two members did not respond. Volunteer members totaling 73% (17) agreed, while 13% (3) disagreed. Three volunteer members 13% did not respond.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study are consistent with the literature reviewed. Leadership must shape the organization and communicate the vision of career and volunteer members coming together as one. Leadership must be able to communicate the concept for how the system is to work. Part of the problem in Montgomery County is that the members really are not sure where they fit and just how the system should operate. A very clear framework of roles and expectations should be worked into the organization so all members from bottom to top know their place and understand how they interface and impact each other.

The organization's leaders also must continue to work to make the organization truly integrated. While this is easy to say, it will be hard to do. The literature and research results indicated the need to provide for similar training, qualifications and performance requirements. This is important so everyone understands and can count on each other's capabilities. Both career and volunteer members frequently indicated the desire to train together. They also indicated the desire to get together in other group activities. This author feels the more the groups interact at a close work level, the more they will come together as a team.

A core issue discovered in this research is that there is a low level of trust especially among the career members. While this is a critical symptom to look for in the health of the organization it can be anticipated that it will improve as the organization improves. It should be emphasized that some of the distrust may be coming from a past failure to adequately communicate. There appears to be system wide feeling of inferiority as a group. This may be improved by aggressively promoting the system within and constantly communicating concrete examples of success, improvements and commitment to excellence. The organization needs a formal feedback loop that allows leaders and followers to know how things are going. The rank and file indicates that the reorganization has produced nothing tangible in the way of improvements. The organization must find a way to show progress. Survey results indicating the need for equal accountability, consistent rules, respect, decency and all the other areas that are desirable in any effective organization, are considered by this author to be objectives of MCFRS. This author feels that the reorganization of the MCFRS is moving constantly in these directions. Tangible evidence will either be suddenly evident to everyone one day, or can be provided to members as the organization improves.

The author observes that some of the members would prefer, depending on their affiliation, that the organization should be all career, or all volunteer. Neither are likely to happen anytime soon and continuing strategies to further those causes will only undermine the effectiveness of the organization in the near term. In a personal interview with Chief David Dwyer, Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services he emphasized that a stand off between the career and volunteers would just be a barrier to the greatness they could achieve. Dwyer said, "The volunteers are not going away, and the career are not going away." He put it

succinctly, they need to “Get along.” In regard to the reorganization of the fire and rescue service, Chief Dwyer indicated that there were two broad objectives in improving the relations, reduce the existing communications gap and isolate the pockets of dissenters to the reorganization and move forward. Obviously leadership must make it clear that there will be a combination system, and the expectations of all members are to work as one within those parameters. However, one tactic to reduce the tension between the groups is, as stated earlier, make more opportunities for truly working together. In addition, it may be helpful to clearly identify who owns the system. Identify that it is not the volunteers who own the system; not the career who own the system; it is the citizens who own the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MCFRS needs to initiate a project to fully describe and document what a combination EMS, fire and rescue system is and what it means to the members of MCFRS. The document should identify specifically how the MCFRS should operate and what the roles and expectations are of its members.
2. MCFRS leaders must show and communicate commitment to the combination system, most importantly by aggressively promoting the conceptual framework and the requirement that the services will be delivered in an integrated fashion.
3. MCFRS members must accept that they are an integral part of a combination system that depends upon them to work together with others paid and not paid, to deliver critical services to citizens and visitors of Montgomery County.

4. MCFRS should create a special credo for member interaction that highlights the need for all members to treat each other with respect and decency; emphasize the value of self discipline, accountability and dependability; require that all members work to help others improve their capability and that the ultimate responsibility is always the commitment to serve the citizens and visitors of Montgomery County.
5. MCFRS should constantly promote the progress and achievement of the organization with the intent of raising the esteem of the members. Information should be provided in a way that affords the members to see before and after improvements and problems solving, comparative analysis to other similar fire services, etc.
6. MCFRS should institute a frequent on-going feedback loop that will allow leaders and followers alike to know how the organization is doing. Organizational surveys of working conditions, morale and suggestive comments should be incorporated to identify problem areas or gauge the general attitude of the organization.
7. More collaborative interaction with other combination systems should be initiated to enhance the understanding of this concept for service delivery. Local, regional or national symposiums that focus on combination systems and their inherent challenges should be organized.
8. Every effort should be made to seek and encourage participation and input from all membership areas of the organization.
9. Provide an ongoing/periodic opportunity for representatives of all groups to bring out and discuss problems and concern each group might have. This will provide another opportunity

for groups to work together, and will create opportunities for commonality among the members.

10. Require all work sites and member groups to develop on-going projects aimed at involving and integrating other member groups in collaboration. Document and make the information available to the whole organization. Provide substantial reward for excellent and sustained projects.
11. Identify and provide substantial reward for the best work group relations between career and volunteer members.

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APPENDIX A.**M E M O R A N D U M**

May 30, 1999

TO: Fire, Rescue and EMS Members

FROM: A/C Mike Love, DFRS C Shift Chief

SUBJECT: Survey to Gather Data About Career/Volunteer Relations

I am beginning to gather data for a research project as part of my last course of the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) from the National Fire Academy. This program required attendance at EFOP classes for 4 years and successful completion of 4 applied research papers using standard research and publication criteria. For this research paper I have chosen to research ways that we can improve relations between career and volunteer EMS, Fire and Rescue personnel. County law requires the accomplishment of emergency service delivery through a unique partnership of career and volunteer personnel. This partnership can only be a success if people work together. I seek your assistance in this research by completing the attached survey that asks about demographic information, work relations and other work related issues.

You were chosen using a random process to make this method and the resulting data as objective as possible. The survey addresses several questions I want to answer in the research and seeks both programmed answers (yes, no, sometimes, always, etc.), and written comments. Since these papers will be published and available on the Internet and at the National Fire Academy Learning Resource Center I ask that written comments be professional and not identify individuals. If you choose not to complete the survey please return it to me.

After completing the survey use the addressed envelope and return the survey to me at the 12th floor EOB. I will need the survey back no later than Wednesday June 16, 1999. Thanks in advance for your help.

A. What organizational conditions impede favorable relations between career and volunteer fire and rescue members? Circle the best answer.

A1. My organization supports a combination career/volunteer system.

Never Sometimes Always

A2. My organization's leaders communicate to me the importance of supporting a combination system.

Never Sometimes Always

A3. **(Career)** As a career member I see the volunteer members as supporting the combination system.

Never Sometimes Always

A4. **(Volunteer)** As a volunteer member I see the career members as supporting the combination system.

Never Sometimes Always

A5. **(Career)** As a career member I feel that the career leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.

Never Sometimes Always

A6. **(Career)** As a career member I feel that the volunteer leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.

Never Sometimes Always

A7. **(Volunteer)** As a volunteer member I feel that the career leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.

Never Sometimes Always

A8. **(Volunteer)** As a volunteer member I feel that the volunteer leaders care that there are good work relations between the career and volunteer members.

Never Sometimes Always

A9. I am aware and **support** the County law establishing the delivery of EMS, Fire and Rescue services through an equal partnership of career and volunteer members.

Yes No

A10. **(Volunteer)** As a volunteer member I am treated well by career members.

Never Sometimes Always

A11. **(Career)** As a career member I am treated well by volunteer members.

Never Sometimes Always

A14. I can identify specific areas in organizational structures (rules, laws, and practices) which negatively affect relations between career and volunteer members.

Yes No (If yes please include specific instructions in the comment area).

A16. I will follow the lead of my fire service organization (DFRS, Local FD) if they endorse and support the combination service.

Yes No

A17. I will follow the lead of my fire advocacy organization (County Volunteer Association, Local 1664, and Career Officers) if they endorse and support the combination service.

Yes No

B. What behaviors will be desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members?

B1. Assuming that all members providing EMS, Fire and Rescue service have bought into a combination system, please provide 5 short statements that describe the behaviors that need to be developed between the two member groups to enhance relations.

Example: We need to discuss problems with the intent of solving them.

We need to train together on a regular basis.

Attach additional pages as needed.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

C. What organizational guidelines are in place or need to be added to guide relations between career and volunteer members?

C1. Describe your thoughts about some organizational guidelines that need to be in place to guide relations.

Example: The organization must develop and promote specific principles that directly describe how the members should relate to each other.

Please describe as bullets. Attach additional pages as needed.

E8. I feel our organization is as good or better than those in jurisdictions in our region.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E9. I feel that recent changes in the MCFRS makes it a better place to work/volunteer.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E10. I feel that people trust each other in the (MCFRS) organization.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E11. I feel people trust our leaders.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E12. I feel the MCFRS is concerned about the safety and welfare of the members

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E13. I feel MCFRS is a safer organization than most EMS, Fire and Rescue organizations.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E14. I can name three programs that actively address the safety of the members.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E15. The facilities that house the MCFRS members are safe.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E16. The facilities that house the MCFRS members are comfortable and adequate to meet our needs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E17. I feel personnel (career/volunteer) actions, hiring, member recruitment, elections and promotions are fairly administered.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E18. I feel that the MCFRS provides me the opportunity to participate in the organization and for input on my concerns.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E19. I feel MCFRS members (career/volunteer) receive appropriate benefits and compensation.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E20. I am proud to be an EMS, Fire and Rescue service provider.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E21. I am proud to be a member of MCFRS.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

E22. I feel the MCFRS and all associated member organizations promote diversity and fair treatment of its members.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Additional Comments

APPENDIX B.

B1. Assuming that all members providing EMS, Fire and Rescue service have bought into a combination system, please provide 5 short statements that describe the behaviors that need to be developed between the two member groups to enhance relations.

Career Responses

1. Stricter regulations on volunteer requirements/education
2. Accountability for when volunteer doesn't follow policies, i.e., 2 in/2 out
3. Station manning stays the same; never drops because of volunteer day
4. We need to give credit to those doing the work.
5. Identify Montgomery County apparatus as such – not V.F.D. apparatus
6. Stop allowing 20-year old kids being in charge of 20-year career veterans
7. Place all volunteers under DFRS control
8. Both career and volunteer need same level training
9. Better chain of command
10. Volunteers should not be in career chain of command
11. Career OIC should have control of station
12. Better communication
13. Equal training for equal rank
14. Knowledge of what level volunteers are trained (helmet, etc.)
15. Same requirements for volunteers: filing reports, etc.
16. Same disciplinary actions.
17. Describe the role of volunteers to all career employees.
18. Have the same disciplinary actions for both groups.
19. Whether real or not, volunteers seen as not to be responsible for their actions.
20. Their precise role seems to be undefined not only to career personnel but to volunteers themselves. What are we to do when they "show up" with no instruction.
21. Place volunteer and career in same recruit schools.
22. Have scheduled duty times.
23. Have career preceptors
24. Need to know everyone is committed to serving community.
25. Need to share station responsibilities.
26. Need to know that training and promotion standards correlate
27. Need to see operational volunteers on regular basis
28. Need to know disciplinary procedures are equivalent
29. Put aside individual agendas
30. Understand that some do the work for pay, some for pleasure or as a hobby
31. Discuss the importance of streamlining resources, i.e., apparatus to available
32. Share in the responsibility of service to the community in personal development and public relations.
33. Volunteers need to be disciplined just like career.
34. Volunteers need to do standbys and stay for the duration of the shift
35. We must follow one leader
36. We need to be able to get supplies requested in a timely fashion.
37. Do need to train together
38. Need to respect each other's responsibilities
39. Need to solve differences on both informal and formal basis
40. We need equal training.
41. We need to have one set of rules
42. Need one chief to run entire department.
43. Need same exact training requirements for promotion
44. Same exact promotional test.
45. Need to train together.

46. We need the same training and education requirements for advancement
47. We need mutual respect.
48. We need to enforce regulations across the board.
49. We need to improve our communication with each other.
50. We need to have fun!
51. Cross-training between career and volunteer since we work together
52. "Power struggles" need to cease in the Chief and President rank of volunteer organizations.
53. Deal with the reality as to who provides the service – predominantly career
54. Provide identity for those actively providing the service -- predominantly career
55. Enable career officer to discipline volunteers.
56. Understand and respect chain of command
57. We provide a service; we don't pick and choose calls
58. Do not bring your family member on volunteer work
59. Ten years as a volunteer doesn't equal 10 years career, if you're on probation.
60. We need to do activities that will unify group
61. We need to play together.
62. We need equal standards
63. Equal opportunities for training
64. We need to act like a combination system
65. We need to communicate with each other
66. We need to be confident in each other's skills/knowledge
67. What behaviors will be desirable to enhance relations between career and volunteer members? Open-minded, willingness to work together
68. We need to have the same training standards (ex: Anne Arundel County)
69. We need more communication from the top down
70. We need to hold both sides accountable for their actions
71. We need to understand each other's goals or plans
72. We need to have some standards for training for all.
73. We need one set of rules and regulations for all.
74. We need to enforce all rules equally.
75. We need to train together.
76. We need standardized promotional standards for all.
77. Get rid of volunteers; go all paid
78. Regular training needs to be implemented for volunteers
79. Training, education, standards same at equal ranks volunteer
80. Accountability for volunteers; behavior in station and out
81. Standbys and regular duty nights/weekends enforced and tracked
82. More interaction; drills, station management, etc.
83. Volunteers need to realize they are support for career
84. Make this one fire service working together to solve the same goal of providing the best fire/EMS to the citizens of the County
85. All components need to recognize that there is now a change in where the responsibility and authority lies as to tax donations and administrative functions of the department. The Fire Administrator is the overall "boss" not the LFRD. The Chief DFRS needs to be a lot more assertive here too.
86. We need to develop trust between the two
87. Both sides also need to respect each other.
88. We need to develop trust between the two
89. Both sides also need to respect each other.
90. Respect each other as fellow human beings
91. General standards of decency
92. Cooperation in carrying out duties
93. Keep mindset of serving public, not competing.
94. True acceptance and implementation of equal training standards
95. Discipline of younger volunteer members – helping clean station, cleaning up after self would help

96. Discipline/accountability of volunteer members responding while intoxicated – this includes high-ranking officer.
97. Stop talking and listen
98. Do what you say you will do
99. Identify the hard heads on both sides and marginalize them
100. Focus on service to the public instead of ourselves
101. Have the Administrator really take charge.
102. We need to provide the best service to the public
103. We need to have one set of rules
104. We need to think as one service
105. We need to start acting on ideas instead of talking about them
106. Change is good
107. Not to be verbally abused on the fireground
108. The changes in the law and reorganization have not affected most career either way at the company level.
Hopefully it will in the future. More operational power needs to be moved to the career side.
109. More County control of day-to-day station operations needs to be handled by career
110. It is my opinion that the volunteers to do as a group want favorable relations
111. Both sides must see their role
112. Training must be equal
113. All must maintain apparatus and station
114. Equal training levels
115. Strict rules for promotion of volunteer officers
116. Driver status should be handled by Academy for both
117. Need to be aide on ambulance before working on engine/truck
118. We need to develop mutual respect for each organization
119. Equal training especially with in-station crews
120. Equal qualifications
121. Some type of discipline for volunteers
122. Enforcement of policies and procedures; not selective enforcement
123. We need better communications among ourselves
124. We need to have the same standards: training, uniforms
125. We need to include the volunteers when we train
126. Get rid of “do nothing” committees
127. When a problem arises, solve it together
128. Volunteer participation should be based on hours on calls only
129. Officer standards must be the same
130. No grandfathering!
131. Standards need to be uniform for all segments
132. A better method for open discussion between both groups
133. Although a central volunteer chief has been established, it has not impacted the accountability of the individual corporations.
134. Keep communication open between both groups
135. Standardization of rules/regs for both
136. Uniform procedures for fire/EMS
137. Equal standardized training for all who participate
138. Same requirements for promotions on both sides; no more “good old boy” network
139. Recognition that volunteers act as supplemental firefighters not primary
140. Don’t make career firefighter answer to a part-time volunteer weekend warrior
141. Put decision-making authority back in the Department’s hand and have a unified system, not 19 little fiefdoms
142. Training together on a regular basis
143. Planning together for our future (goal setting).
144. Trust

- B1. Assuming that all members providing EMS, Fire and Rescue service have bought into a combination system, please provide 5 short statements that describe the behaviors that need to be developed between the two member groups to enhance relations.**

Volunteer Responses

1. Up-county volunteers need to be more professional
2. Career firefighters should not label all volunteers the same way. Stop treating all volunteers as inferior.
3. Crackdown on errant volunteers
4. Train career personnel on how to deal and respect Down-county volunteers
5. Career personnel need to realize that volunteers are just as reliable as career counterparts
6. Train together (evenings and weekends)
7. Rotate positions on apparatus
8. Discuss problems openly (with the intent of solving them, of course)
9. Work together on station duties
10. Needs to be an environment of mutual trust and understanding
11. Need to train together continuously
12. Configuration of equipment should be standardized
13. Crews who dine together seem to get along better
14. Mixed crews on apparatus work together well
15. We must be able to trust the capabilities of all personnel
16. We should train together regularly
17. Regular incident debriefing would help focus on specific problems
18. The same volunteers and career firefighters should work together regularly (scheduling)
19. Riding assignments should be made by the OIC equitably, without regard to volunteer or paid status.
20. Mutual respect
21. Understand what drives vol
22. Increase trust
23. Less negative feedback, volunteer will rise to occasion/need
24. Increase dependency upon vol and paid
25. Training Academy classes together
26. EMT-P class with volunteer and career
27. In service drills together
28. Volunteers should spend more of their free time at the station
29. Volunteers should always remember career has more experience
30. Training together would develop more respect for volunteers
31. Volunteer decisions should be based on input from career
32. Department social occasions develop relationships between career and volunteer
33. We need to train together to understand how each other operates
34. We need to understand all SOPs both career and volunteer
35. We have to respect decisions from both services
36. As FFII up to MFF, we need to respect officers in both services
37. As volunteers the promotion of rank should be the same as DFRS
38. We need to be treated as equals in the service
39. We need to train together more on a regular basis
40. We don't need to be referred badly to each other (negative thinking toward each other)
41. Attitudes had to change between volunteer and PAID personnel
42. Certain terminology needs to change (career vs. PAID). We are all career firefighters, some are paid and some are volunteers.
43. There can be no distinction in training levels but career should not try to artificially inflate the number of types of classes required attempting to shut out volunteer members.
44. Career and volunteer ranks must be equal

45. Attempts to discredit the other (career or volunteer) must end
46. Both sides must enthusiastically embrace cooperation
47. There cannot be a spirit of cooperation on the surface and “unofficial” sanctioning of activities to undermine the adhesiveness.
48. More inter-group training and/or socializing
49. We need to respect one another
50. We need to train together
51. We need to perform work swaps for each other
52. We need equal accountability/responsibility
53. We need to have the same rules for career/volunteer
54. Address perceptual differences that inherently lend to bias
55. Educate both sides to what it takes to advance on both sides
56. Educate both sides on the disadvantages of working with biases
57. Educate senior leadership on both sides as to their role to develop good working relationships
58. Bring in “expert” for methods on how to address the inherent biases that exist
59. Volunteers need to assume more collateral duties to improve station
60. Negative attitudes need to be transferred to all career stations
61. Both sides need to stop whining
62. Station officers and commanders need to coordinate actions that cause cohesiveness between career and volunteers.
63. Career need to accept this as a combo system
64. The union must work better to provide for their members not promoting a constant conflict with volunteerism.
65. We need to market the advantages of each group (career/volunteer) so that each group understands the need for each other.
66. Leadership must show commitment and support
67. Nay-sayers must be quickly dealt with
68. Problems must be acted upon quickly
69. Open dialogue on concerns, priorities and problems.
70. Work to develop joint esprit de corps.
71. We all are here to do the same job
72. I am really no different than you
73. We really need to train together always
74. The dinner table is neutral ground
75. Station issues should remain in the station
76. We need to train side by side
77. We need to stop back stabbing each other
78. Equal treatment and punishment
79. Same policies and procedures
80. Joint training
81. Less pressure on volunteers to staff
82. County-wide officers on both sides (more equal)
83. Discuss problems with intent to solve – not blame
84. Change the vs. and them mentality
85. Provide similar disciplinary actions/consequences
86. Provide opportunities to train together
87. Provide opportunities to socialize together
88. We need to be held to the same standards
89. More training for volunteers comparable to career
90. We need to train together on a regular basis
91. Career officers need to express support of volunteers
92. Volunteer officers held to same tests for rank as career officers
93. Social activities together on occasion

C1. What organizational guidelines are in place or need to be added to guide relations between career and volunteer members.

Career Responses

1. The career District Chief needs to be in charge over volunteer chief that works as planner for the telephone company
2. Same requirements for rank.
3. Career officers must be allowed to run the station and be in total charge
4. Volunteers must be held accountable for their actions
5. All personnel must play by the same rules and standards
6. All personnel should have the same policies and procedures.
7. Every member should stand up to high moral standards.
8. Someone convicted of embezzlement in one corporation should not be allowed to join another and then be in the same position or sit on the Board of Directors.
9. The manning standards and requirements to maintain a status must be the same for career or volunteer.
10. From an operational standpoint, I feel since the career staff runs 75-80% of the calls and are aware of station situations, the career OIC and SCO should be higher in the chain of command and have more control over stations, apparatus and equipment.
11. Furthermore, DFRS never gets credit for our work. The public still thinks we're volunteers. We're never recognized in print or media.
12. The apparatus, owned by the County, should have County seals on front doors with corporation name arched over the seal to promote uniformity.
13. All stations should be required to have minimum manning standards. As a traveling Lieutenant, many times been in station with engine and truck/tower with only 2 personnel. Is this safe for our personnel?
14. If there is to be two separate then completely separate them. If they are to be integrated, then completely integrate; meaning, participation in the same recruit classes and same preceptor packages.
15. SOPs should be the same and standards for progression and promotion should be the same.
16. If these things are not possible, and I assume that some are, then their roles, rules and responsibilities on both sides as pertaining to each other should be clearly delineated so that a FFII career personnel knows how to deal with the volunteer chief or vice versa.
17. Volunteer should have the same qualifications as career.
18. The organization should probably form a committee to address specific issues that are brought up from both sides. This committee should be made up of Local 1664 and active volunteer members.
19. The current policies in place are good, however, they need to be expanded and enforced.
20. Become united as one group instead of two with different leadership roles.
21. More equality with regards to facilities and supplies as well as equipment.
22. Corporation has control over supplies that are used by career personnel mostly.
23. The organization should remember who they are here to serve; the public
24. Equal standards
25. The organization should promote joint training and activities.
26. The DFRS needs centralized purchasing for all equipment and apparatus.
27. Corporations need to "lend out" any spare apparatus (a fire truck is a fire truck)
28. The stations need to be manned; career or volunteer. Both sides need to make a commitment and be held accountable or fix the situation. If the apparatus doesn't hit the street, we are not doing all we can do.
29. The organization must work towards one common goal.
30. The organization must set and enforce all policy and procedures for all.
31. Paid all the way because volunteers can not get caught up with the regulations and stipulations.
32. Volunteer leaders need to have better control over their own personnel.
33. Station officers need more control over subordinate volunteers.
34. Under one flag. Have all trucks/engines/ambulances, etc. display Local 1664, DFRS and
35. LFRD decals.
36. Same uniforms – rocker on shoulder for career and volunteer
37. Have all personnel follow same rules

38. Train together
39. Need to restructure command level authority. Existing District Chiefs need to be at least equal to or above volunteer Assistant Chiefs. DFRS Assistant Chiefs need to be at least equal to or above volunteer Deputy chiefs and DFRS Bureau Chiefs need to be equal to or above volunteer fire chiefs.
40. The lines of authority need to reflect the levels of overall responsibility.
41. Training and promotion standards need to be the same. Twenty-year-old volunteers with 1 year's experience cannot manage or supervise 10-15 year career people. If the guy/girl next to you went through the same process to get to the same rank, maybe a little respect will develop.
42. Stronger policies to demand accountability for volunteers. If supposed to be there for duty night, either show up or arrange substitute so be counted on.
43. Require respect and civility on both sides (personal feelings aside)
44. Just follow the ones we have.
45. Train together
46. Move activities together
47. One set of rules and condense the package.
48. The volunteer side needs more hands-on mid-level officers.
49. Corporation money should be spent in areas to improve service and employee safety, not to buy things the corporation wants
50. If volunteer officers are going to command career personnel, the volunteers should meet the same promotional standards. This standard would be administered by one group.
51. The organization needs to develop an ethics statement. This statement will act as an instrument to show to all members of the organization one ethics standard. This should be followed by the creation of an Ethics Council. The Council would be made up of young and old, union, management, volunteers. The Council would then review possible violations of the ethics statement. Findings would be published to all stations. To develop positive relations, the organizations must start with a sound ethical basis.
52. Safety:
Two in/Two out: need to educate volunteers on this issue
Gear Inspection: Insure the same standard as the career
Policies and Procedures: Lets have the same agenda; follow same policy
53. Education, Knowledge, Experience:
54. Equivalent training;
55. knowledge base to hold specific ranks
56. equivalent education requirements to move into higher ranks
57. More control must be taken over volunteer officers
58. Guidelines for who's in charge of this department and who are the professionals should be in place.
59. Promote career/volunteer training programs; more often that not we work side-by-side but our training is so different.
60. If we are to be one department, combined, they eliminate "volunteer" on the buildings and apparatus and designate everything as the DFRS.
61. Make this a real **fire department** with one chain of command (it has gotten better over the last 2 years with the new administration.)
62. I believe that if we adopted something like the accreditation standards from the IAFC and chose that as a goal, it would give us both something to work for/towards together.

Volunteer Responses

C1. Describe your thoughts about some organizational guidelines that need to be in place to guide relations.

1. The current structure is good, but there must be accountability. A ranking officer is a ranking officer. A career chief tells me to jump, I jump. I tell a career firefighter to jump, he jumps (as I am a fire-rescue captain).

2. Career officers should not have the right to discipline a volunteer if volunteer officer cannot discipline a career person. Other than that I think most stuff is ok.
3. The organizational guidelines are in place and pretty clear. If we all followed both letter and spirit of existing policy and procedures, there would probably be very few problems.
4. Equitable riding assignment guidelines need to be established so that an engine is not "the career piece". Assignments should be based on time in service and training level.
5. Regular evening/weekend activities should be planned to allow both groups to improve skills while working together.
6. Quality of training and competency should be the same, regardless of volunteer or career status. A firefighter should be able to depend on the skills of another, without having to know him personally.
7. See volunteers as equal, not as second class of fire/rescue provider
8. Express appreciation for support of the combined system. A simple polite thank you goes a **long** way
9. In making decisions for a station, the volunteer governing body should solicit input from all [career] shifts and incorporate it in their planning.
10. The organization must have the same standards to better serve the community
11. Each corporation needs to develop the same standards to supply the best service to the community
12. Both PAID and volunteer leaders need feedback from the people who work in the "trenches" to make the fire and rescue service the best in the area.
13. The organization must make it clear that no action that undermines good relations will be tolerated. I have been in another organization that was forced to accept women. A group of men thought they would take it upon themselves to rid their organization of the women. Although that current administration did not like the fact that they had to accept women, they did not allow that behavior.
14. Unless we are able to truly integrate ourselves into one entity, this problem will not go away! The dead wood on both sides needs to be cleaned out. Until the career personnel can see the volunteers as equals, there will never be parity. The only way I see this happening is to truly integrate the two groups and, unfortunately, I'm not convinced this is possible. unless career and volunteer personnel are seen as interchangeable, there can be no respect and without mutual respect for each other's abilities, there can be no progress.
15. Senior officers must openly and honestly acknowledge career/volunteer in their organization to the overall commitment to EMS/fire/rescue.
16. All career/volunteer must openly and honestly acknowledge the contribution and commitment to EMS/fire/rescue
17. Programs need to be developed to place members of the career service into strong volunteer corporations. Career members need to volunteer for station assignments with strong volunteer corporations, i.e., Rockville, Burtonsville. Keep members who dislike volunteers in all career stations.
18. How best to maintain the physical facilities through cooperation between volunteer and career. My experience is that it is very difficult to add needed chores to the career schedule.
19. The career must develop a realization that this is a combo system and to quit fighting the volunteer commitment.
20. There are many guidelines that are now in place, however, career do not follow them or commonly ignore them because there is no retribution from the County level.
21. Have someone act as an ombudsman
22. Have an advocate (career and volunteer) for problems and concerns
23. Publicize the fact that we have a dual system, we will for the foreseeable future have two systems and we should all work towards the goal of having a top notch system
24. Publish and post information on career/volunteer courtesy's
 - fill gas
 - re-stock
 - clean-up
1. Have joint programs
2. The MCFRS must act as one unit. Everything the career members are entitled to should be available to the volunteers., i.e., pro boots, PT clothes, etc.
3. We must work from one rulebook and need more volunteer involvement on major committees.
4. The Training Academy must treat everyone the same, and use the same rules for all.
5. We need the same rules/directives. One set for both career and volunteers.
6. We should all meet the same requirements for promotion and working in the field.
7. The station and duty officer should have the ability to direct and control volunteers as well as their personnel.

8. Consistent policy across volunteer organizations and career for promotion to officer
9. Consistent policy for disciplinary issues
10. A little respect from career; If not , then a little patience from career since training is not equal; If not, a little part in the training process.

D1.What do career and volunteer members identify as their expectations of the other in regard to favorable relations?

Career Responses

1. Working together as a team. Have the same training and be able to function at the same level.
2. Treat everyone the same. Expect each other to function at the same level.
3. They must remember we do not work for the corporation. And, we are not maids to their needs.(station maintenance, apparatus cleaning!)
4. Expectation to be professional in dress and manner.
5. Put effort into their job or task
6. Perform as a member of a team ... to lead or to follow
7. Accept positions available to them.
8. Participate in station activities, i.e., station maintenance, station drills
9. As a MF/P with no prior volunteer experience, I have very little concept of the volunteer system. Nor in my 7 years of career experience has it been explained to be how exactly this system is supposed to work.
10. Good-spirited cooperation in all duties
11. Uniform accountability and discipline
12. Responsible, professional behavior all around
13. Just being promoted
14. Being able to drive and ride the seat
15. Career expect volunteers to be of equal training, experience and qualifications for the same position or rank.
16. Career expect volunteers to perform house work, maintenance and other routine activities besides running calls.
17. Career expect volunteers to abide by the same policies, regulations, and SOPs.
18. That they are just as good at the job as the other group
19. Expect to be treated equally.
20. Expect all individuals to be competent in their positions.
21. Expect all individuals to work as a team.
22. To be treated as part of the team
23. Share in the workload
24. Have equal input regarding equipment, etc.
25. Same training requirements
26. Same uniform requirements
27. Accountability, same crime/same punishment
28. Same in-Station responsibility
29. Respect.
30. Being able to do the job
31. Be knowledgeable
32. Be willing to work together
33. All members need to be equally trained and have the same education level for promotion.
34. One set of policy and procedures for all.
35. Accountability on both sides is a must
36. We need to staff every position 24 hours a day, either career or volunteer. Scratching is not acceptable – the citizens deserve and pay for more.
37. Volunteers must be able to do the job proficiently.
38. Volunteers must not just show up whenever.
39. None that I can see

40. I think it goes back to what the fire departments were created for to start with: to protect life and property from fire, disasters, terror.
41. All the money should go in one pot. No tax money for conventions, parades, banquets, etc. Tax money should go where needed not to the biggest mouth.
42. Work together for betterment of the department as a whole.
43. Big problem that impedes relations is the inequity of officers minimum training and experience levels required of volunteer officers. Most career personnel do not respect volunteer officers.
44. Volunteer departments need to recognize that we now have a predominantly career service supplemented by volunteer personnel, yet volunteer company is still dominant.
45. Being competent at their jobs
46. Obey the total regulations, not just the ones they like
47. Reasonable respect for their counterparts.
48. Expect equal levels of training
49. Accountability – if supposed to be here – each person is here on duty whether volunteer or career
50. Expect everyone to pitch in for work to be done around the firehouse like housework, checkouts, or maintenance.
51. Be dependable.
52. Identical training requirements for each rank.
53. Identical disciplinary requirements
54. Realization that the service is career supported by volunteers.
55. To provide the best service possible
56. To become one unit or group
57. To follow one set of rules.
58. Train the same
59. Work as hard
60. Be mindful of public relations
61. Must be treated the same
62. All personnel should have equal/same training requirements
63. We expect everyone to play by the same rules, i.e., SOPs, discipline, training, rank guidelines
64. We expect everyone to get credit for a job well done.
65. We expect the public to be educated that their tax dollars are providing a valuable service and paying for 900 career firefighters (oops, I guess that is a little off the subject)
66. Career expect accountability (for the volunteers to be held accountable for their actions).
67. Think County-wide and not locally
68. Training/education equivalency for all ranks
69. Working together as a team. Have the same training and be able to function at the same
70. level.
71. Treat everyone the same. Expect each other to function at the same level.

D1. What do career and volunteer members identify as their expectations of the other in regard to favorable relations?

Volunteer Responses

1. A baseline level of technical competency commensurate with the position the member is fulfilling
2. Professional bearing, both with the public and in the station
3. A set of single standards and rules that are enforced impartially among both volunteers and career personnel by fair and competent officers.
4. I expect to be treated equally
5. I expect the guy riding the seat or driving to know where he/she is going.
6. I expect to be given a fair chance.
7. Both groups should have an expectation of quality performance on the part of the other and this should be backed up by actual competence

8. Members should be able to expect fair treatment and equitable assignment. A career officer should have similar command authority to a volunteer officer, even in the station.
9. Simple thank you for a job well done
10. Respect for volunteering
11. Genuine interest of volunteer issues
12. Volunteers expect to be treated as respected co-workers
13. Career members expect the volunteers to do a professional job
14. Unfortunately, career members know that volunteers do not go on the number of calls that they do and, therefore, assume that they will not always do as good a job as they do
15. Volunteers expect to be treated as respected co-workers
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18. Promotion through the ranks should have same guidelines on both sides of the service.
19. Check off for apparatus should be the same for both services
20. Discipline should be the same for both services. Just because a volunteer can't lose money from his check, doesn't mean he shouldn't be reprimanded if the action warrants it.
21. Experience of volunteers so that the PAID personnel are taken seriously on calls to effectively serve on calls.
22. Experience of volunteers so that the PAID personnel are taken seriously on calls to effectively serve on calls.
23. If I understand the question, I believe the career think they are expected to undermine the career-volunteer relationship. We hear of what goes on at union meetings and we read in the union's own minutes "slams" of the volunteers. The action of certain career officers greatly distressed me when the latest "Question E" was on the ballot. It seemed that is their vigor to get rid of the volunteers, anything goes. How can these be favorable relations in the face of this.
24. Mutual Respect: given and received. I expect to be treated as an equal. Unfortunately, it only takes a few "bad apples" to spoil the whole barrel. We need a zero tolerance policy once guidelines are established. Again, I'm not convinced this is possible because the upper management on both sides has to buy into the idea and I just don't believe they will.
25. Everyone needs to be good firemen on both sides of the hall.
26. I expect, as a volunteer, to be treated as a peer and a professional.
27. I expect the career members to treat the station with the same respect they would give to their home or any other professional workplace.
28. I expect them to respect the dual (volunteer/career) aspect of our system.
29. I expect the same respect that is given to my career counterpart and vice versa.
30. To have input on decisions that impact my corporation when it comes to County Government
31. Not to expect the volunteers to always staff the 2nd piece or ambulance all the time
32. There is a wide range of attitudes out there which make this question difficult to anyone
33. From my perspective I expect respect and the same camaraderie extended to others (career/volunteer) in the department
34. I think career personnel expect people willing to help in every aspect of station activity including housework, restocking, maintenance, etc.